

B. Monitoring Progress

As the County proceeds with implementing the Action Plan, outlined above, in pursuit of the fourteen major goals of this Comprehensive Plan, it will be supporting and achieving three fundamental features of a high quality of life:

- A Vibrant Community
- A Strong and Stable Economy
- A Healthy Environment

In order to monitor and measure progress toward these ends, two things are needed:

First, a *procedure for monitoring and reporting progress* must be established and implemented. Procedurally, the Board of Supervisors has three logical options:

- It could charge the Planning Commission to include in its required Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors an assessment of the progress made on the County's Action Plan, including the measurable indicators listed below, or
- It could appoint the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) as a standing committee charged with evaluating and reporting on progress in implementing the Action Plan; or
- It could do both of the above – appoint the CAC to advise and report its findings to the Planning Commission which would, in turn, include those findings (as well as its own assessment) in its Annual Report to the Board.

Second, a *method of measuring progress* must be established. Progress can be measured in terms of how well the tasks in the Action Plan are being implemented, and also in terms of how well the fourteen Comprehensive Plan goals are being achieved for the key resource topics of the community.

Measuring progress in implementing the Action Plan is relatively straightforward. Each task has a schedule, and progress in meeting the schedule can be regularly and continuously evaluated and reported.

Measuring progress toward achieving the Comprehensive Plan's goals for the key resources should be done through the use of measurable indicators of overall quality of life, making it possible to consistently evaluate progress in an objective manner. Measurable indicators are shown in the following table.

Quality of Life Indicators

Resource Topic and Goals	Issue/Concern	Indicator
A. Economy		
Goal 3. Preserve Agricultural Industry and Economy	Is the economy strong?	Unemployment Rate Wage Levels
Goal 4. Achieve a Diversity of Employment in industries that are compatible with County's desire for environmental protection, high and stable employment levels, increasing incomes, & a strong agricultural sector		Productivity: Company Revenue per Employee Diversity of Industries and Jobs
Goal 5. Achieve a Strong and Compatible Tourist Industry		
B. Environmental Quality and Natural Resources		
Goal 1. Preserve the Quality of Natural Resources (surface water, groundwater, air, soil, quiet, night sky)	Is the local environment healthy? Is the regional environment healthy? Are local natural resources adequate to meet future needs? Is bio-diversity being maintained? Is energy consumption excessive or inefficient?	Groundwater quality; Surface water quality; Air quality; Watershed quality index; Water consumption vs. supply; Size, shape and composition of wildlife habitat areas; Percent use of renewable energy; Kilowatts of electricity consumed per 1,000 s.f. of developed space; Percentage of capacity in landfills; Percentage of solid waste recycled; Amount of new development visible from public road system
Goal 2. Preserve the Scenic Beauty of the Landscape (farm fields, vistas, mountains, forests, open land, parks and recreation areas)	Is waste disposal and recycling adequate and safe? Is the scenic quality and character maintained despite continued development?	
C. Land Use and Development		
Goal 6. Achieve a Balance of Compatible Land Uses and Communities in which people can live, work and play	Is land developed so as to maintain the function of natural systems? Is new development built to accommodate pedestrians & cyclists? Are new development sites linked to each other with streets & paths? Does new development have human-scale streetscapes?	Percentage of floodplain and wetlands preserved; Proportion and amount of functional pedestrian walkways and bikeways; Ratio of street connections to linear feet of road; Percentage of new streets with human-scale vs. motor-vehicle-scale streetscapes;
Goal 7. Achieve a Range of Housing Types and Values to meet the needs of all income levels	Does new development contain mixed-uses? Is housing affordable?	Percentage of development square footage in mixed uses Percent of households paying over 35% of income for housing

Quality of Life Indicators continued

Resource Topic	Issue/Concern	Indicator
D. Transportation		
Goal 10. Preserve and Improve Free Flow of Traffic and Improve the Safety of the Road System	Are adequate transportation facilities & services available?	Roadway conditions; Levels of service on major roads; Percent of trips using mass transit; Accident rates on major roads;
Goal 11. Preserve/Improve Accessibility of Non-Motorized Traffic (pedestrians, bicycles, horses, buggies)	Are people able to conveniently use alternative modes of travel?	Percentage of trips using alternative modes
E. Public Facilities and Governance		
Goal 8. Achieve Efficient Delivery of Public Facilities and Services (education, administration, utilities)	Is the level of public facilities and services adequate?	Recreation Land per 1,000 population; Educational attainment levels;
Goal 9. Achieve Efficient and Effective Public Safety Responses (fire, rescue, law enforcement)	Is local government responsive, open and collaborative? Are response times adequate?	Public perception of government responsiveness through public opinion survey; Response time for emergency services
F. Community and Population Health, Culture and Identity		
Goal 12. Preserve Historic Buildings and Sites	Are important historic sites and buildings being preserved and restored?	Number of documented sites preserved;
Goal 13. Achieve a Rich and Diverse Community of Arts, Culture and other features of the “life beyond work”	Are adequate cultural and recreational opportunities available? Are people healthy?	Number of arts or cultural events/performances at public sites; Number of public recreational events Chronic disease-related deaths per 100,000 population; Percent of mothers with adequate prenatal care; Death rate from accidents, drugs, suicide; Crime rate;
Goal 14. Achieve Community Identity, Cooperation, Spirit and Solidarity	Do people feel a strong spirit of community identity?	Public perception of community identity thru public opinion survey

C. Amending and Updating the Plan

The Code of Virginia requires that every local government adopt a comprehensive plan and review it at least every five years. Many localities review the plan more frequently. Some establish a formal process for considering regular plan amendments. In growing jurisdictions, it is typical to see a complete overhaul of the plan every 10 years.

Note that any amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is required by the Code of Virginia to go through the same legal process as was done for the original adoption; that is, a public hearing before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Additional measures for public comment and input beyond the required public hearings are optional but often desirable, especially when considering major changes.

Approach to Comprehensive Plan Updates

Following is the approach to plan review set forth for Rockingham County in this plan.

Annual Review. The County will review the status of the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis in conjunction with the Planning Commission's Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors (the annual report is required by State Code). The annual review will include an evaluation of the status of implementing the Action Plan, as well as a brief review of existing and emerging policy issues.

Five-Year Review. The County will conduct a major review and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan every five years, in accord with State Code requirements. This review will be more substantial than the annual review, and will include significant formal citizen input. Goals, Policies and Implementation Actions will be reviewed, evaluated and amended, as appropriate.

Plan Amendment Applications. In order to reinforce the importance of the Comprehensive Plan as the primary policy guide for decisions on land use and infrastructure, the County will invite landowners or other individuals or groups to submit applications for amending the plan. The County will establish specific procedures and submission requirements for Plan amendment applications.

Role of Citizens

For the Comprehensive Plan to be an effective, living document, citizens at large must remain actively involved. Citizens, as individuals and groups, are encouraged to monitor the County's efforts to follow and implement the Plan, and to participate actively during the Plan update process.